

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8064

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 09031

NODIS

EYES ONLY FOR TARNOFF FROM HOLBROOKE

EO 11652
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJECT: QUESTIONS ON CHINA

1. JUST BEFORE I LEFT THE SECRETARY ASKED ME ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS FOR SOME SUGGESTIONS ON POSSIBLE QUESTIONS THAT MIGHT BE ADDRESSED TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IN A PUBLIC OPINION POLL CONCERNING CHINA. COULD YOU PROVIDE HIM WITH THE FOLLOWING, WHICH I WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING RETYPED FIRST AS A MEMO FROM ME TO HIM. IF HE DOES NOT OBJECT, I WOULD ALSO REQUEST THAT THIS MEMO BE SHARED WITH HARRY THAYER, WHO HAS IN THE PAST WORKED CLOSELY WITH SOME AMERICAN POLLING ORGANIZATIONS IN DESIGNING SIMILAR MATERIAL.

2. BEGIN MEMO.
TO: THE SECRETARY
FROM: DICK HOLBROOKE
SUBJECT: QUESTIONS ON CHINA

3. IN REFERENCE TO YOUR QUESTION, MAY I FIRST REFER YOU TO A POLL CONDUCTED IN APRIL OF 1977 BY POTOMAC ASSOCIATES. THIS STUDY, PUBLISHED ON THE EVE OF YOUR
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TRIP TO CHINA, CONTAINS SOME FASCINATING DATA, ESPECIALLY PAGES 21-36. (FOR TARNOFF: COPIES ARE BEING HELD TO ATTACH TO THIS MEMO BY DICK CHRISTIENSON AND JEFF BADER IN MY OFFICE.)

4. THAT POLL SUGGESTS SOME PARTICULARLY VALUABLE AREAS OF QUESTIONING. IN ADDITION, HODDING CARTER'S OFFICE

HAS DONE SEVERAL EXCELLENT ANALYSES OF AMERICAN PUBLIC
OPINION ABOUT CHINA.

5. EVERY SURVEY THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN HAS SHOWN A
MARKED AMERICAN PREFERENCE FOR THE PRESENT SITUATION, AND
AN AVERSION TO THE SEVERING OF TIES WITH TAIWAN.
AMERICANS SEE THE VALUE OF BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE
PRC, BUT THEY ALSO DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE U.S. ASSIST
CHINA IN BECOMING A GREAT POWER. CONSIDERING THE
AMERICAN REACTIONS TO OUR INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHEAST
ASIA, IT IS SURPRISING THAT 61 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE
POLLED LAST YEAR FELT THAT IT WAS EITHER "VERY" OR
"FAIRLY" IMPORTANT TO THEM THAT, "IN CONSIDERING THE
POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH
MAINLAND CHINA....THE U.S. CONTINUE OUR INTEREST IN THE
SECURITY OF TAIWAN."

6. HOWEVER, THE DEPTH OF AMERICAN FEELINGS HAVE NOT
BEEN WELL MEASURED. IT SEEMS APPARENT THAT THERE IS A
GREAT DEAL OF MISINFORMATION OR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF
THE ISSUES INVOLVED. IN FACT, 39 PERCENT OF THE
RESPONDENTS LAST YEAR SAID THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER THE
"REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN" HAD A COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT
OR NOT* 29 PERCENT DID NOT KNOW IF THE MAINLAND WAS
COMMUNIST OR NOT.

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7. WITH THIS IN MIND, I WOULD SUGGEST QUESTIONS THAT
TRIED TO TEST THE DEGREE TO WHICH AMERICAN ATTITUDES
TOWARDS NORMALIZATION WOULD BE AFFECTED BY DIFFERENT
CIRCUMSTANCES ON TAIWAN AFTER NORMALIZATION. HERE ARE
SOME ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS, BUILDING FROM, BUT NOT
IDENTICAL TO, THOSE ASKED BY POTOMAC ASSOCIATES:

(1) WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS MAINLAND
CHINA, VERY FAVORABLE, SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE, SOMEWHAT
UNFAVORABLE, OR VERY UNFAVORABLE?

(2) WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS REPUBLIC OF
CHINA ON TAIWAN: VERY FAVORABLE, SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE,
SOMEWHAT UNFAVORABLE, OR VERY UNFAVORABLE?

8. (HOLBROOKE COMMENT ON THESE TWO QUESTIONS: WHILE
I FIND BOTH THESE QUESTIONS SOMEWHAT VAGUE, THEY WERE
ASKED LAST YEAR IN A LONGER FORM, AND IT MIGHT BE USEFUL
TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY SIGNIFICANT SHIFT. 1977 ANSWERS
CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 28-29 OF PAMPHLET.)

(3) MAINLAND CHINA IS ANXIOUS TO PREVENT THE INCREASE

OF SOVIET POWER AND INFLUENCE IN ASIA AND OTHER PARTS
OF THE WORLD. WE HAVE FUNDAMENTAL POLITICAL AND
IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES WITH CHINA. DO YOU THINK THE
U.S. SHOULD:

(A) ASSIST CHINA TO BUILD UP ITS MILITARY STRENGTH
TO RESIST SOVIET POWER AND INFLUENCE, OR SHOULD WE NOT
HELP CHINA IN THIS WAY?

(B) SELL CHINA ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, SUCH AS COMPUTERS,

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EYES ONLY FOR TARNOFF FROM HOLBROOKE

TO ASSIST THEM IN SPEEDING UP THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

(4) TWO DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS CLAIM TO BE THE LEGITIMATE
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE. WHICH ONE DO YOU
THINK IS THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA--THE GOVERNMENT
ON THE MAINLAND IN PEKING, OR THE ONE ON THE ISLAND OF
TAIWAN? (HOLBROOKE COMMENT: THIS IS AN INFORMATIONAL
QUESTION, AND COULD BE DROPPED.)

(5) HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS FOR THE UNITED
STATES TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH
MAINLAND CHINA--VERY IMPORTANT, FAIRLY IMPORTANT, NOT
PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT, NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL, DON'T
KNOW. (ASKED IN LONGER FORM LAST YEAR.)

(6) THE CHINESE HAVE SAID THAT THEY WILL ONLY AGREE
TO FULL DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION AND EXCHANGE OF REGULAR
AMBASSADORS WITH US IF WE BREAK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON TAIWAN WHICH ALSO CLAIMS TO BE

THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA. DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD BREAK RELATIONS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH SUCH RELATIONS WITH MAINLAND CHINA?

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(7) THE CHINESE HAVE ALSO SAID THAT IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH US THE U.S. MUST ALSO TERMINATE ITS DEFENSE TREATY WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON TAIWAN. DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD TERMINATE THAT DEFENSE TREATY IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH MAINLAND CHINA?

(8) IN REGARD TO THE ENTIRE ISSUE OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MAINLAND CHINA, WOULD YOUR OPINION BE CHANGED IF THE MAINLAND CHINESE WOULD PUBLICLY STATE THEIR INTENTION TO SETTLE THE QUESTION OF TAIWAN PEACEFULLY, AND IF WE WERE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ALL PRESENT COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN, INCLUDING ARMS SALES?

(9) IN CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MAINLAND CHINA, HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU PERSONALLY THAT THE U.S. CONTINUE OUR INTEREST IN THE SECURITY OF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN?

(10) AND (11) (FOR TARNOFF: HERE PLACE THE EXACT QUESTIONS ASKED ON BOTTOM OF PAGE 34 OF POTOMAC POLL).
END MEMO. MANSFIELD

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